The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Give to the Red Cross

WHOLE NO. 1821 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY MARCH 5, 1946 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 36, NO. 10

Senate Group Rejects Case Bill; To Draft "Stingless" Substitute

Washington, D. C.—The Senate Labor and Education Committee virtually killed the obnoxious anti-labor Case bill, approved by the House.

The committee decided to draft a substitute bill containing provisions of the "sting" to which the AFL has bitterly objected. It voted not to accept the Case bill as passed by the House.

Chairman James E. Murray designated himself as chairman of the sub-committee to re-write the legislation. Other Democratic Senators named to the sub-committee included Senators Pepper, Ellender and Tunnell. Republicans included Senators LaFollette, Morse and Ball. Only two Senators regarded as opposed to labor's views—or rather as only one—could be detected in the lot.

Senator Murray announced that his committee was opposed to "stealth" legislation that would put labor in a straitjacket. He indicated most of the compulsory features of the Case bill would be eliminated in the new Senate draft.

Scheduled for the discard are the provisions requiring a 30-day cooling off period before strikes can become legal, prohibitions against "mass" picketing and the secondary boycott.

Committee members were reported opposed also to provisions making unions liable for civil damages claimed as the result of strikes on the ground that lawsuits of this sort would make labor-management relations "unworkable."

Some sentiment was expressed in favor of compulsory arbitration in disputes affecting vital public utilities. It was regarded as certain that the Senate draft will include provisions for strengthening the U. S. Conciliation Service.

The substitute bill is expected to be ready for debate and action in 2 or 3 weeks. Meanwhile, Senator Murray denied his committee intended to bury the legislation entirely.

The danger in the legislative situation is that if the Senate approves any bill—no matter how mild—it will go to a joint House-Senate conference where some of the more drastic provisions of the Case bill may be restored. For this reason the AFL is inclined to oppose any legislation in this field at this time.

House Defeats Subsidies For Building Materials

Washington, D. C.—An inflation-minded coalition of southern Democrats and Republicans in the House of Representatives set out what President Truman described as "the heart" of his veterans' housing program—subsidies to encourage increased production of scarce building materials.

Anxious to force higher prices in the building supplies industry, the same forces which have teamed up to force through antilabor measures defeated the subsidy proposals by a tel-ler vote of 161 to 92.

In so doing, the congressional majority ignored appeals from the President, the Administration's chief economic advisers and from organized labor.

Housing Administrator Wilson Wyatt, commenting on the House action, said:

"If I were a veteran hunting for a home, I would be rather disheartened—a bit perplexed and not a little angry. As I have said before, we cannot provide the homes needed for veterans without the use of premium payments to expand production of building materials."

It was feared in some circles that unless the Senate reverses the House action in the principles of freedom, liberty and democracy and who are uncompromisingly opposed to the practice of discrimination because of race, color or nationality will not remain passive or yield to indefinable, minority opposition.

"Those who conducted the filibuster in the Senate in opposition to the FEPC bill must realize that they have strengthened the efforts of the friends of this legislation to fight on. A surrender to minority domination and control means compromising with injustice. That cannot be, must not be and will not be accepted in this great democracy. Mere acquiescence in this procedure means the substitution of government by force on the part of the minority for government by law and majority rule."

Wyatt's goal of providing 2,700,000 new homes in two years will be adversely affected by the refusal of the House to authorize subsidies.

YOUR HEALTH!

Following is the third of a series of articles by eminent physicians and medical authorities explaining why enactment of health insurance legislation is vital to the welfare of the American people.

By DR. MARTHA MENDELL

Member Physicians' Forum Executive Committee

With Congressional hearings soon to begin on nationwide compulsory health insurance, the American Medical Association is now trying hard to sell the public on the merits of the voluntary health insurance plans which it sponsors. The AMA claim is that these plans, if given time, will meet all the medical needs of the individual as well as of the nation.

Just what do these plans offer? The consumer who wants to get his money's worth should look into their benefits very carefully before he decides to sign up with one of them.

In the first place, the medical benefits are limited. Most of the plans pay only the doctor's bills for hospital visits for a specified period of illness. In other words, the patient has to be really sick and in the hospital before he gets any treatment under the terms of his policy. There is little or no provision for preventive care, for periodic physical check-ups, or for treatment during ordinary illness.

Furthermore, certain types of illness are often excluded. Extra charges are frequently levied for maternity cases, for example, in the contract. Sometimes extra charges are made if the patient's income is over a certain amount. The hospital bill is always extra.

As a result, the medical-society sponsored plans take care of only a small part of the individual's total medical needs.

The consumer-sponsored type of voluntary plan (such as the Group Health Association of Washington, D. C.) offers the subscriber considerably more for his money. So do some of the private and industrial prepayment services (such as the Ross-Loos Clinic and the Kaiser plans on the West Coast).

Although the actual premium payment may be higher in these plans than in those sponsored by medical societies, the subscriber gets a better bargain because the service is much more complete. Besides, emphasis is on keeping the subscriber well rather than treating him after he is seriously ill.

The AMA does not approve of these plans which gives the subscriber a better break than the medical-society schemes. Some years ago the AMA was convicted of criminal conspiracy for trying to put the Group Health Association of Washington out of business.

The reason that the medical-society plans can give so little service is that they pay their doctors on the traditional fee-for-service basis. Therefore, the money that the plans receive from subscribers does not go very far. The consumer-sponsored plans and many of the private and industrial prepayment plans employ their doctors on a salary basis. This is more satisfactory and economical, but it assures a higher quality of service. Modern, scientific medicine requires the skills of several types of specialists, working together as a team. If each of the specialists receives separate payment for each service he renders the cost soon becomes prohibitive.

The chief drawback of all voluntary plans, from the national point of view, is that they are too expensive. The subscription charges are simply out of reach of the low-income group and can be met only with difficulty by those in the lower middle-income category. Thus, well over half the population cannot avail themselves of protection under the voluntary plans. Although such plans have been in operation for many years, they have succeeded in attracting less than 5 million members.

Compulsory health insurance, financed with regular payments from workers and employers, as well as general funds, would give comprehensive medical coverage to virtually the entire population, at a cost well within the ability of people to pay.

Bulletin!

SPUR HIGHER OUTPUT OF LOW-COST CLOTHING

Philadelphia—An 18½-cent hourly pay increase was successfully won by the AFL without a strike for 6,000 employees of the Melvale Steel Co. here, including office workers.

The negotiations, supervised for the AFL Federal Labor Union by Organization Director Frank Fenton, resulted in the pay award being made retroactive to Feb. 18. Half of the pay increase, or 9¼ cents an hour, was made retroactive to Jan. 1.

This is one of the greatest and most significant gains made for steel workers by organized labor.

Washington, D. C.—The Office of Price Administration and the Civilian Production Administration have agreed jointly to increase the supply of low-cost clothing by at least 50 percent.

With the OPA providing an incentive price rise in staple fabrics and apparel, amounting on an average of 5 percent, and the CPA tightening its controls over the distribution of the output, the agencies said they hoped to be able to bring production to within 10 percent of the essential requirements.

Supplies of these fabrics now fall short of essential needs by at least 40 percent, it is said.

The price increase to be followed by the OPA would result in an average increase of 5 cents on a man's shirt, officials estimated.

Metal Polishers Ask Jobs For Disabled Veterans

Cincinnati—Here's how! The Executive Board of the Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers and Helpers International Union, at a meeting in this city, set an example for all other unions on how to find jobs for partially disabled war veterans.

The union established a Division of Veterans Affairs under the directorship of William H. Mostyn, of Rochester, N. Y., to undertake a drive to assist veterans to secure well-paying jobs in the metal polishing trade.

Efforts will be particularly directed to obtain employment for veterans, of whom there are about 20,000, according to official figures. International President Ray Kelsay said that men who have lost a foot or a leg can in no wise be considered disabled or handicapped by employers because most of the work in the metal polishing trade is done sitting down.

Mr. Mostyn was instructed to set up veterans committees in local unions in the large industrial centers and to see to it that these committees take up with employers the need for setting aside an substantial number of jobs for amputees.

If employers object, the union is ready to exert pressure upon them to live up to their public responsibility in this regard. However, the union expects to receive employer cooperation in most plants.

Mr. Kelsay said Mr. Mostyn is a veteran of the first World War and is well qualified to handle the new assignment.

AFL Still Fighting For Passage Of FEPC Measure By Congress

New York City—In a message to a mass meeting of 15,000 at Madison Square Garden, AFL President William Green declared that the fight for enactment of Fair Employment Practice legislation will not be surrendered by labor merely because the FEPC bill was killed by a Senate filibuster. The message, read to the rally by AFL Vice President Matthew Woll, said:

"It is a reflection upon our Democratic processes and parliamentary procedure that a minority of the members of the Senate was able to bring about a temporary defeat of this measure. However, those who believe in the principles of freedom, liberty and democracy and who are uncompromisingly opposed to the practice of discrimination because of race, color or nationality will not remain passive or yield to indefinable, minority opposition.

"Those who conducted the filibuster in the Senate in opposition to the FEPC bill must realize that they have strengthened the efforts of the friends of this legislation to fight on. A surrender to minority domination and control means compromising with injustice. That cannot be, must not be and will not be accepted in this great democracy. Mere acquiescence in this procedure means the substitution of government by force on the part of the minority for government by law and majority rule."

Treasury Awards Medals To 18 AFL Union Men

Washington, D. C.—Medals for patriotic service were awarded to 18 Washington AFL labor leaders by the U. S. Treasury, as part their outstanding work in War and Victory Bond campaigns, at a recent meeting of the Washington Central Labor Union. One of the medals posthumously awarded to the late John Locher, former president of the Washington Central Labor Union, was presented to his widow.

The awards were made by Mr. Hugh Lynch, director of the District of Columbia U. S. Savings Bonds Division of the U. S. Treasury, assisted by Ernest J. Fontana, regional representative, and Gilbert E. Hyatt, Jr., chief of the Section of the Treasury.

In presenting the medals Mr. Lynch said:

"Many men are here tonight who possess the faculty of exceptionally strong leadership and upon a number of whom you have bestowed the honors of official rank. These officials have performed especially distinguished service in the War Finance Program. Their enthusiasm, through the Treasury Department, recognizes their outstanding accomplishments, and it thrills me to have the honor of presenting to each of these men of achievement an enduring symbol of this recognition. This emblem is a silver medal, on the face of which the Treasury Seal and the Minute Man Symbol of the War Finance Program appear with the words "U. S. Treasury Award." On the other side, the famous flag-raising on Mt. Surabachi, Iwo Jima, is portrayed with the inscription "For patriotic service—War Finance—1941-1945" and the engraved name of the recipient.

Frank P. Fenton, director of organization for the American Federation of Labor and a recipient of one of the awards, responded for the labor leaders. Mr. Fenton stressed the need of continuing support of the U. S. Treasury's Savings Bond program for rehabilitation of the world after the war as well as personal security.

District of Columbia Central Labor Union leaders receiving the medals were: Clement F. Preller, president; Charles B. McClosky, vice president; Robert C. Lester, financial secretary; John Locher (deceased), former president; Frank P. Fenton, AFL director of organization; Fred S. Walker, editor Trades Unionist; Paul J. Schwars, president, Musicians Union; Ernest B. Spangler, board of trustees; John M. Davis, Painters Union; William J. Johnson, Carpenters' District Council; Joseph P. Hillock, Painters Union; Jay C. Turner, Engineers Local; Norman L. Hayes, Retail Clerks Workers; Edgar J. Appel, treasurer Carpenters Local; R. B. Blackburn, secretary-treasurer, Carpenters District Council; Axel Bouderland, Carpenters Local.

The Washington Central Labor Union recently voted full support to continuation of the payroll savings plan by the workers of their respective unions, in response to a pledge by President Green to Secretary Vinson of the U. S. Treasury.

Printing Pressmen Win Wage Hike Of $14 to $15 a Week In Cleveland

Cleveland.—Printing pressmen were awarded a wage increase of $1 per week for day work and $15.02 a week for night work by an arbitration board rendering its decision in the case of the Cleveland newspapers and the Cleveland Newspaper Printing Pressmen's Union No. 8.

The arbitration board consisted of George L. Berry, president of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union; Joseph Hostetler, Cleveland attorney, and George W. Bahlman, former president of the National Employing Printers' Association.

In its decision, the arbitration board expressed its belief that through voluntary arbitration labor and management can promote the public welfare and establish sound relationships. It said:

"This board is conscious of the high compliment that has been paid it by the parties in submitting this case, and we have been commissioned with authority to settle their differences, but in our judgment the action of the parties far exceeds the compliment; rary references because of the high principle involved through which the parties have agreed to adjust their differences by peaceful means and through the processes of arbitration.

"In presenting the foregoing statement, this board directs attention of the local parties to these facts:

"1—That there has existed and now exists an Arbitration Agreement between the American Newspaper Publishers' Association and the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union of North America, which agreement has existed for more than 35 years.

"2—That by reason of the existence of the International Arbitration Agreement there has been but one newspaper stoppage in the pressrooms of the newspapers of America in more than 22 years."

However, the board warned against the use of arbitration until all efforts at conciliation have been exhausted.

LADIES GARMENT WORKERS GRANTED RADIO STATION

New York City—The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union was notified this the Federal Communications Commission had granted its application for a radio station (frequency modulation) at Chattanooga, Tenn. Hearings on the union's application for 5 other stations—New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, St. Louis and Los Angeles—will be held shortly.

The purpose of these stations, as stressed in the union's application, is to serve as agencies for adult education and community cultural work. The stations, it was explained, through unity broadcasting corporations chartered in the different states, are intended to be self-sustaining and to be controlled by local union groups with the cooperation of local community leaders.

Morris S. Novik, for 7 years director of the New York Municipal Broadcasting Station (WNYC), was designated by the ILGWU as its radio consultant.

UMW Warns Coal Operators It Demands Higher Wages

Miners To Join State Feds And Local AFL Bodies

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green called upon State Federations of Labor and City Central Labor Unions to grant affiliation to local unions of United Mine Workers which recently returned to the AFL fold.

Meanwhile, the officers of the UMW notified local branches of the affiliation and declared that the union's convention in September will adopt a policy regarding affiliation with the AFL's state and local bodies. When the UMW was affiliated with the AFL, its constitution urged such local affiliation.

In the letter of notification, President John L. Lewis, Vice President John O'Leary and Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Kennedy said:

"We believe that this affiliation is a step in the direction of greater unification and solidarity of labor in the United States and Canada. We feel that this action will greatly add to the strength and influence of the American Federation of Labor because it becomes increasingly more evident that the CIO will not unite and solidify its forces and unify its policies if we hope to compete with financial and industrial interests that are seeking to destroy labor organizations through legislative and other means.

"We believe that there is a sincere and honest effort on the part of all concerned to make this affiliation effective and to render greater and more effective service in the interest of labor; and we express the hope that this consolidation will be the means of bringing about better efficiency, unification and solidarity, to the end that we may aggressively and constructively better advance the intrests of the millions of men and women in the ranks of labor."

In a radio interview, Mr. Lewis told Washington newspapermen he saw little immediate prospect for an amalgamation of the AFL and CIO, such as is felt to be desired. He said:

"At the present moment I know of nothing which would lead to an optimistic opinion on that subject. That is something that the membership of the CIO will have to decide. In the future, however, that may have cause to do some thinking on the subject. What they will determine, I do not know."

Asked whether unity should be attained within the framework of the AFL or CIO, he declared the AFL is the proper vehicle, adding:

"We believe that the AFL at the present time is a more American-type organization than the CIO. It is dedicated to the principles of perpetuating the free institutions of America. It stands against collectivism and against centralization of controls in the government. It does not constantly depend upon the government to make all decisions affecting the policies of organized labor."

Nonoperating Rail Unions Open Fight For 30 Cents More Per Hour

Chicago. — Fifteen nonoperating railroad unions opened their wage case before the special arbitration board of 6 members here with voluminous evidence supporting their demands for an increase of 30 cents an hour.

Lester P. Schoene, counsel for the unions, emphasized that railroad pay has not kept pace with wages for similar work in other industries.

"The first principle that we invoke," he said, "the one on which we stand principally and the one by which the amount of our increase is measurable, is the principle of equality of treatment with other employes in the general movement of wages."

Mr. Schoene presented 6 basic justifications for the unions' wage demands:

1—Increased hazards of employment.

2—Higher living costs.

3—The railroad industry's favorable profit condition which makes the "time for the increase appropriate."

4—Increased productivity, which entitles workers, under sound economic principles, to a higher share of what they produce.

5—Threatened loss of take-home pay due to reduction of hours and downgrading of jobs since the end of the war.

6—Wage rate increases are necessary to maintain the nation's material progress and provide a progressively higher standard of living.

Mr. Schoene emphasized that the railroad industry has more than doubled its revenues during the past 4 years and faces no reconversion problem. He pointed out that nonoperating employes, many of whom there are about a million represented by the unions, are being paid 26 cents an hour less than is received in manufacturing industries for comparable jobs. He said nonoperating rail workers are now being paid less than what the government considers sufficient for minimum family subsistence.

As the hearings before the arbitration board continue, union officials will present detailed facts and figures covering various pay scales and the employers will be given opportunity to give their side of the case. The board will then hand down its recommendations.

Letter Carriers Ring Bell On Radio For Pay Boost

Washington, D. C.—The letter carriers rang the bell—with a top-notch radio program over the Mutual Broadcasting System—publicizing the need for legislation by Congress to increase the pay of postal workers.

The program, under the auspices of the National Letter Carriers Association (AFL), included talks by postmen now in the fighting forces and stationed overseas, an endorsement by the Post Office Department of the pending pay legislation—and a radio appearance by Postmaster General Gael Sullivan and an appeal for quick congressional action by NLCA President William C. Doherty.

By a happy circumstance, the radio audience heard Pvt. James P. Gahagan of the U. S. Marines say from the island of Guam that he is "looking forward to receiving my old job of carrying mail out of the Bethlehem (Pa.) Post Office." He urged Congress to vote the postal pay increase "before I get home" because even out in Guam food prices have soared in the case of living here at home.

From Cairo, Egypt, Capt. John Donelon of the U. S. Army told of his travels around the globe but insisted he is anxious to get back to the "garden spot of the world—good old Cincinnati!" He said he had received Liberty Bonds from Cincinnati Post Office employes and Post Office explaining the "rude jolt" they received in their take-home pay when working hours were cut from 48 to 40.

"These long Cincinnati, I've met public servants all over the world," Capt. Donelon concluded, "but I still rate Uncle Sam's postal employes tops."

Assistant Postmaster General Sullivan echoed this praise, paying high tribute to the way postal employes met the test in war years. Speaking for Postmaster General Hannegan, he added:

"These faithful workers are hard pressed in attempting to meet difficult living conditions. Postmaster General Hannegan is in the fullest sympathy with the objectives which would give them additional compensation in line with the President's policy.

"No organization is better than the men and women who comprise it. The country has been blessed by having a corps of able, devoted public servants in the postal service. They deserve the high esteem in which the country holds them. It is our hope to give them the just treatment which they merit and to work with them to give the American people constantly better postal service."

Mr. Doherty wound up the program by asking support of the pending pay bill. He explained:

"Briefly stated, the legislation is designed to bring relief to the hard pressed postal workers by authorizing a salary adjustment to make up for the sudden loss in take-home pay. It is hoped that the increase finally granted will be at least $400 a year. The case will be because tremendously by addressing a brief note to your Congressman and Senators urging that the Burch-Mead proposals, H.R. 5059 and S. 1715 be enacted into law without delay."

OFFICE EMPLOYES JOIN UNION LABEL DEPT.

Washington, D. C.—The Office Employes International Union, recently affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, has also become affiliated with the Union Label Trades Department, Paul R. Hutchings, president, and J. Howard Hicks, secretary-treasurer of one of the youngest unions in the AFL urge that all members of the OEIU insist that the union label appears on all letters, correspondence and other material prepared by union office workers. They also urge that the Office Employes' emblems be worn by members of the union.

I. M. Ornburn, secretary-treasurer, Union Label Trades Department, announced that the Office Employes' label and emblems add three more to the 69 union labels, shop cards, and service buttons of the membership. International and international unions affiliated with the Union Label Trades Department.